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NOMINATION OF JAMES D. THEBERGE

FEBRUARY 9 (legislative day, JANUARY 25), 1982.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. PERCY, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, submitted the following

REPORT

together with

ADDITIONAL VIEWS

The Committee on Foreign Relations, to which was referred the nomination of James Daniel Theberge to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Chile, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon and recommends that the nomination be confirmed.

COMMITTEE ACTION

The nomination of James D. Theberge to be U.S. Ambassador to Chile was submitted to the Senate by President Reagan on November 10, 1981, and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations that same day. Ambassador Theberge testified before the Committee on December 7, 1981.

At its meeting on February 2, the Committee voted 6–3 to report the nomination favorably to the Senate. Voting in favor of the nomination were Senators Percy, Lugar, Kassebaum, Boschwitz, Pell, and Dodd. Those opposed were Senators Helms, Tsongas, and Cranston.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

James Theberge has long been considered an expert on Latin American policy issues, serving from 1975 to 1977 as the U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua. Prior to that appointment, Ambassador Theberge was Director of Latin American and Iberian Studies for the Center for Strategic and International Studies at Georgetown University. Ambassador Theberge is fluent in Spanish and has a working knowledge of French, German, Portuguese, and Italian. A copy of Ambassador Theberge's biography is appended to this report.

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Taking into account Ambassador Theberge's expertise in Latin American affairs as well as his previous diplomatic experience, the Committee on Foreign Relations concluded that he was well qualified to serve as the next Ambassador to Chile. At the same time, some members of the Committee have expressed concern about this appointment. To some degree, this concern rests not with Ambassador Theberge's qualifications but with the Reagan Administration policy of warming relations with the present Chilean government, headed by General Augusto Pinochet. Concerns have been raised in Committee and the discussion continued on the Senate floor about the human rights environment in Chile and about the Pinochet government's commitment to an eventual return to democracy. As a result of this debate, the foreign assistance legislation for 1981 now requires as preconditions for providing economic or military assistance to Chile, that the President certify that the human rights situation has substantially improved and that the Chilean government is not engaged in or supporting international terrorism. A similar certification is now also required for Argentina.

The Senate, in large part, supported the repeal of restrictions on assistance to Chile and Argentina in order to be evenhanded with two neighboring nations that had experienced serious domestic problems and whose respect for and support of democratic institutions we wished to encourage.

At the same time, Members of this Committee and the Senate repeatedly expressed their belief that in loosening the restrictions on aid to Chile and Argentina it was of critical importance that the United States carry out an even-handed and credible approach in addressing human rights problems in both countries. In this way, the United States could maintain itself as an effective advocate for human rights by speaking out across the board, using quiet diplomacy at times and when that is not effective more public means to ensure that our government acts consistently and with conviction.

During his nomination hearing, Ambassador Theberge expressed his support for both the certification procedures established by the Congress and the need for a credible human rights policy. Ambassador Theberge further reinforced his position in responding to a question submitted to him by Senator Helms, in which he discussed the standards that will apply to Chile in assessing its human rights situation:

> The Standards applied to Chile will be those applied to all countries. The Reagan Administration is committed to a strong human rights policy which treats all countries even-handedly and balances all of our pertinent interests in a particular country before taking any action. The United States intends to: expound our beliefs, condemn abuses of freedom and decency, reinforce international moral and legal standards and maintain our reputation as a reliable partner to our friends in order to maximize our influence. Our responses to particular situations will take into account all U.S. interests, as well as the pressures upon a particular country. Quiet diplomacy will be our primary approach.

Consequently, based upon his demonstrated expertise in Latin American affairs and his testimony, the Committee on Foreign Relations urges the Senate to approve the nomination of James D. Theberge to be United States Ambassador to Chile.

JAMES DANIEL THEBERGE

Position for which considered: Ambassador to Chile.

Present position: Special Adviser on Inter-American Affairs.

Office address: Department of Defense, 3017 M Street NW., Washington, D.C. 20007.

Born: December 28, 1930, Oceanside, N.Y.

Legal residence: Washington, D.C.

Marital status: Married.

Family: Wife: former Gieselle Fages; children: James Christopher, John Paul, and Alexander Leonard.

Home address: 4426 Cathedral Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20016.

Education: B.A. 1952, Columbia University; M.A. 1960, Oxford University (England); and M.P.A. 1965, Harvard University.

Language ability: Spanish (fluent, self-appraisal); French, Portuguese, Italian, and German (working knowledge, self-appraisal).

Experience

Military: 1952–54, U.S. Marine Corps, first lieutenant.

Non-Government: 1970–75, director of Latin American Studies, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University; 1977–79, president of the Institute for Conflict and Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.; and 1979–81 senior development adviser, Planning Research Corporation, New York, N.Y.

Government: 1961–64, economic adviser, Buenos Aires (Department of State); 1965–66, 1966–69 head of lending coordination staff, Department Adviser and Senior Economist, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C.; 1975–77, Ambassador to Nicaragua, and 1981 to present, special adviser on Inter-American Affairs, Department of Defense, Washington, D.C.

Publications

"Latin America: Struggle for Progress," 1977.

"Spain in the Seventies," 1975.

"Latin America in the World System," 1975.

"Western Mediterranean: Its Political, Economic and Strategic Importance," 1974.

"Soviet Presence in Latin America," 1974.

"Russia in the Caribbean," 1973.

"Soviet Seapower in the Caribbean: Political and Strategic Implications," 1972.

"Economics of Trade and Development," 1968.

Numerous articles.

Memberships: International Institute for Strategic Studies (London); Royal Institute of International Affairs (London); and Caribbean Studies Association.

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF SENATOR JESSE HELMS: NOMINATION OF JAMES THEBERGE

I hold genuine doubts about the nomination of Dr. James Theberge to be U.S. Ambassador to Chile. I have concluded that, having those doubts, I cannot support the nomination.

I do not know Mr. Theberge; I have no personal views regarding him. My concern about this nomination began with conversations with a trusted friend in North Carolina who lived in Nicaragua during Mr. Theberge's tour as U.S. Ambassador there. From those conversations, and from reports of others who are familiar with Mr. Theberge's tenure as Ambassador in Managua, I have concluded that, based on his record, Mr. Theberge is not the best choice as U.S. Ambassador to Chile.

There are a number of individuals with expertise in Latin American affairs who are well-suited to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Chile. The United States is obliged to send its best personnel to this important Latin American country, a nation which has pulled itself out of the morass of communist rule that left it economically, politically and socially bankrupt.

The success of Chile, an economic miracle, is an example for other Latin American nations to follow. Through tough measures, borne by all Chileans at all economic and social levels, this ally of the United States has brought about the near-impossible: a stable and workable economy. I visited Chile in 1976, three years after the communist government of Salvador Allende was overthrown. The scars of the Allende regime remained: hyper-inflation, social disruption, economic chaos. Yet, even then, there was hope in Chile, hope that the belt-tightening that Chile was undergoing eventually would result in a better life for all Chileans.

Today, Chileans are beginning to enjoy a better life. Ominously, with that better life has come a resurgence of the leftist-inspired terrorism which nearly destroyed Chile a decade ago. Thus, the U.S. Ambassador to Chile will find himself in a delicate situation.

Mr. Theberge was in a similar situation during his tenure as U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua. The economy was relatively prosperous. While the human rights situation did not please those who demand perfection of our friends while overlooking the cruelties of our adversaries, the human rights situation then was far better than it is now. The country faced a small but growing insurgency just as Chile does now. During Mr. Theberge's tour as Ambassador, the situation worsened, and the United States began to draw away from support of its ally, the government of Nicaragua. Mr. Theberge's role in that is a matter of great concern to first-hand observers who have discussed the subject with me. They have no ax to grind; they are not enemies

of Mr. Theberge. They simply fear that we may see in Chile what they saw in Nicaragua.

That cannot be allowed to happen. Chile is a friend of the United States. Chile supports the United States in international bodies. Chile supports United States goals in Latin America. Chile deserves support.

In this set of circumstances, obviously the U.S. must have an Ambassador whose track record is unambiguous. I sense that Mr. Theberge does not meet this essential criterion.

JESSE HELMS.

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